



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

September 14, 2010

Ms. Jessica Sangsvang
Assistant City Attorney
City of Fort Worth
1000 Throckmorton Street, 3rd Floor
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

OR2010-13944

Dear Ms. Sangsvang:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 396151 (PIR Nos. W002452 & W002453).

The City of Fort Worth (the "city") received two requests from the same requestor for information pertaining to a specified incident. You claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." This section encompasses information protected by other statutes. Section 261.201(a) of the Family Code provides as follows:

(a) [T]he following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under Chapter 552, Government Code, and may be disclosed only for purposes consistent with this code and applicable federal or state law or under rules adopted by an investigating agency:

(1) a report of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect made under this chapter and the identity of the person making the report; and

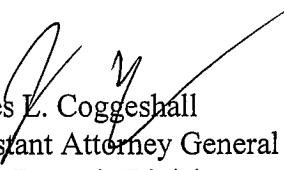
(2) except as otherwise provided in this section, the files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, and working papers used or developed in an investigation under this chapter or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

Because the requested information consists of files, reports, records, communications, or working papers used or developed in an investigation under chapter 261, the information is within the scope of section 261.201 of the Family Code. *See* Fam. Code § 261.001(1)(C) (definition of “child abuse” includes “physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child”). You do not indicate the city has adopted a rule that governs the release of this type of information; therefore, we assume no such regulation exists. Given that assumption, the requested documents are confidential pursuant to section 261.201 of the Family Code. *See* Open Records Decision No. 440 at 2 (1986) (predecessor statute). Accordingly, the city must withhold these documents from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code as information made confidential by law.¹

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php, or call the Office of the Attorney General’s Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,


James L. Coggeshall
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JLC/tp

¹As our ruling is dispositive, we do not address your other arguments to withhold this information.

Ref: ID# 396151

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)